

Animal Industry

Dr. Michael R. Marshall
Director



The Animal Industry Division of the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food has six main programs:

- 1) Animal Health – focused on prevention and control of animal diseases, with special attention to diseases that can be transmitted to humans.
- 2) Meat and Poultry Inspection — to assure wholesome products for consumers.
- 3) Livestock Inspection (brand registration and inspection) — to offer protection to the livestock industry through law enforcement.
- 4) Fish Health — protecting the fish health in the state and dealing with problems of fish food production and processing.
- 5) Elk Farming and Elk Hunting Parks
- 6) Organic Food Program / Investigation and Compliance

Animal Health

Disease free status was maintained in the following disease categories: *Brucellosis *Tuberculosis *Scabies *Pseudorabies *Salmonella pullorum *Mycoplasma gallisepticum

Disease monitoring programs that have continued from prior years include those for heartworm, equine encephalitis, equine infectious anemia, rabies, brucellosis, tuberculosis, pseudorabies, salmonella sp., mycoplasma sp., West Nile Virus, etc.

The Division participated in a West Nile Virus Surveillance program in partnership with the Utah Department of Health, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and the Utah Mosquito Abatement Association. The Division of Animal Industry role was to promote and monitor surveillance for WNV in horses. The Division paid for the laboratory cost of testing 94 suspected cases and a total of 34 horses in six counties were diagnosed positive for WNV. The Division also produce an updated pamphlet alerting horse owners concerning this disease, updated our website, and a developed a training CD on West Nile Virus.

The BLM gathered 268 free ranging horses in the Hill Creek area at the request of the Division and monitoring for Equine Infectious Anemia and West Nile Virus revealed no cases in that area. The absence of any new cases of EIA in the Uintah Basin wild horse herds culminates an aggressive and successful effort on the part of the Division to eliminate the reservoir of that disease that has threatened the domestic and wild horse population in the Uintah Basin for the past decade.

The Division has actively promoted various Health Assurance Programs and has served to certify participants. Such programs as Utah Egg Quality Assurance Program, Utah Cattle Health Assurance Program, Johnes' Disease Surveillance, Beef Quality Assurance, Trichomoniasis testing, the National Poultry Improvement Plan, and others are included in this effort. Division veterinarians met with the various livestock enterprise groups, farm organizations, veterinary associations and other groups in the state to receive input concerning their needs and to acquaint them with new programs. An annual training session for Utah

Egg Quality Assurance Program participants is offered and semiannual farm visits are made by Division veterinarians to verify compliance. Nearly 17,000 ear tags were issued to veterinarians for use in the Trichomoniasis testing program. Testing identified 51 infected bulls in 13 counties in 2002. A single herd accounted for 20 of those infected bulls. Citations for non-compliance were issued to four individuals.

The Division was involved early in establishing a Johnes' Disease Advisory Committee, adopting the standards of the Voluntary Johnes' Disease Herd Status Program, and seeking funding from the legislature to establish the program in Utah. As a result of these efforts over 3 years ago, the state qualified for a grant of \$150,000 from USDA for funding of the program in 2003. Division veterinarians have certified 37 private veterinarians to perform Risk Assessments and develop Management Plans for participating herds. The funding also pays for testing in those herds and other program expenses. This is a significant benefit for Utah producers.

The Division veterinarians monitored livestock exports and imports into the state by reviewing over 10,000 incoming Certificates of Veterinary Inspection and over 1,200 livestock entry permits were issued. More than 280 violations of Utah import regulations were investigated, and 5 citations were issued with fines totaling \$790. Over 18,000 Certificates of Veterinary Inspection for interstate movement of animals were received from Utah veterinarians. These documents were monitored, filed, and forwarded to our Animal Health counterparts in the states of destination.

The division is responsible for licensing hatcheries, qualified feedlot operators, and swine garbage feeders in the state. The number of hatcheries in the state continues to increase in the game bird industry and now numbers 24 licensed hatcheries. The division also administers the National Poultry Improvement Plan in the state and there are now 8 participants. Participants in the program enjoy significant benefits when shipping birds, eggs, and products in commerce.

The Division was heavily involved in responding to the Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) outbreak in California this year. The outbreak extended to Arizona and Nevada, threatening our poultry and turkey industries at our southern borders. Public outreach, encouragement of industry to implement biosecurity measures, and enforcement of quarantines were successful in preventing the entry of this foreign animal disease (FAD) to Utah. One of our field veterinarians volunteered to serve a tour of duty in California during that outbreak.

The Division has maintained a cooperative agreement with FDA for the past 3 years to monitor 33 licensed feed manufacturers in the state for enforcement of the ban on feeding meat and bone meal to ruminants. This is an important fire-wall

to prevent the amplification of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in our cattle population, if the disease were to gain entry to this country. The importance of this monitoring was emphasized when a Canadian cow was discovered to be infected with BSE in Washington State in December 2003. The discovery of that imported cow with BSE will prompt renewed efforts in that area as well as changes in meat inspection policy and a national animal identification program.

Homeland Security has again been a focus of the Division in 2002. The threat of agri-terrorism and the possibility of foreign animal diseases, such as BSE, END, and FMD, being introduced to the state make this a top priority. The Division was successful in obtaining federal funding for developing a mobile emergency response capability. A mobile response trailer has been purchased and equipped. The Division has offered training and consultation in biosecurity measures to various groups and state agencies.

The Animal Health section has the responsibility of providing veterinary supervision and service to the livestock auction markets in Utah in furtherance of our disease control and monitoring programs. More than 500 weekly livestock sales conducted by 8 licensed and bonded sale yards in the state were serviced under this program. Division veterinarians also provided oversight for veterinarians and technicians involved with brucellosis vaccinations.

Meat Inspection

The number of Utah inspected meat processing facilities throughout the state has grown slightly this past year. We have added three new processing facilities to our fully inspected state plants list. Our staff is periodically asked to review and assist new plant managers in preparation of facilities to come under state meat inspection. We work to allow these individuals the opportunity to produce meat products in a clean, well built, and sanitarily maintained facility that fits the minimal requirements established by the U.S.D.A.

The use of computers and software systems continues to make our jobs easier and more efficient. The front line inspector has at his fingertips all the meat regulations and notices and receives updates almost weekly. Information from the office can be passed on to each of the inspectors in minutes compared to trying to pass the information via the telephone or mail. Computers we are currently using were purchased in 1999. By the end of 2004, we hope to have the Inspection System Procedures (ISP) System installed so that every inspector in the state plants will be on the system so the individual inspector can download the Inspection System Task Codes and upload the completed tasks for the plant that he/she is inspecting.

Microbiological testing has been and continues to be an important element in verifying that the HACCP process of inspection is working as intended. A total of 528 samples were collected by the meat inspection staff and tested for Salmonella sp. 111 samples were collected from Ready To Eat (RTE) products and tested for Salmonella, E. coli, and Listeria. In addition, the individual plants collected 288 samples for generic E. coli testing. All samples were negative. In December 2003 Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) or commonly known as mad cow disease, was found in a cow in the state of Washington, when

the brain stem was tested, a new set of regulations was put into place by USDA to make sure the meat the consumers buy is free of BSE. One phase of the BSE rule stated that plants can no longer slaughter non-ambulatory cattle called downer cattle. At the beginning of 2003 it was a federal requirement for each slaughter plant, to have an antimicrobial program in place to help eliminate harmful pathogen on cattle carcasses.

During the past year, over 3,744 hours of training have been given to our staff. We feel that this training is vital in the effort to keep a highly trained and knowledgeable inspection staff. In the future, an even greater emphasis will be placed on training.

UDAF Fish Health Program

By the end of 2003, 34 commercial aquaculture facilities (19 facilities with live fish sales, 14 facilities with dead fish sales, one fish processing plant, and two combined fish processing plants and dead fish sales) and 118 fee fishing facilities were registered with the UDAF; this is a 14% increase in licensed fee fishing facilities over 2002. There are four commercial growers actively involved in fish brokering. Twenty-two new applications, (twenty fee fishing sites and two aquaculture sites) were filed this year. This shows the increased interest in aquaculture in Utah. Two aquaculture facilities were closed for live fish sales due to whirling disease. One facility was closed due to the finding of PKD. Implementation of two biosecurity and health safety plans were begun in 2003 in an effort to prevent the spread of whirling disease. This makes a total of seven biosecurity plans being implemented in the state. The number of species approval requests was 30. This was comparable to last year.

Services extended to clients and the public include: Eighty on-site and off-site consultations and distribution of information on aquaculture and fish diseases; on-site water quality tests conducted at 21 sites; Twenty-six diagnostic cases involving fish losses, water quality, or disease analysis work were conducted (histology, bacteriology, parasitology, water quality, pesticide/heavy metals); issuing and renewing CORs to aquaculture facilities, fee fishing, brokering, and fish processing plants; inspecting eleven species of fish and shellfish at 24 facilities including over 2,013 fish sampled; 405 samples examined for largemouth bass virus; 660 samples examined for Ceratomyxa shasta; 60 samples examined for PKX; 60 samples examined for Mycobacterium; 159 samples examined for spring viremia of carp; 120 samples examined for channel catfish virus; 5 samples examined for Cherax quadricarinatus baculovirus; 65 samples examined for Oncorhynchus masou virus; 1,463 for whirling disease; 385 warm water fish); exotic snail identification work; issuing 46 fish health approvals. Sixty-eight entry permits were issued for twenty-one species of aquatic animals for a total of 3,494,999 fish and eggs and 58,607 lbs. of fish imported into Utah. This is a 20% increase in entry permits over 2002.

One issue of Aquaculture in Utah newsletter was published in 2003. Articles dealt with proliferative kidney disease in Utah, PCR used as a confirmatory test for WD, biosecurity protocol for fish farms, safe storage of fish feed, drought assistance to farmers, omega-3 fatty acids and good health, pond algae destroyed using an ultrasonic device, ammonia and pH interaction, and some excellent fish recipes.

One major investigation of rule infractions was undertaken in 2003. The number of Fish Health Policy Board meetings attended was four. The number of nuisance species meetings attended was three. Two national meetings of fish disease significance were attended. The Fish Health Program participates in continuing education lectures and presentations to enhance and promote the knowledge of fish health and aquaculture.

The Program is dedicated to the continuous improvement of fish health programs, reduction of unnecessary paperwork, customer satisfaction and remaining within the budget. It is the primary aim of the Fish Health Program to prevent and control the spread of fish diseases and still assist aquaculture operators to succeed in business. Specialists work overtime to complete these tasks, and this is done within current budget constraints.

Livestock Inspection

The Livestock (Brand) Inspection Bureau consists of 14 full-time special function officers and 50 part-time inspectors. Their job is to protect the Utah livestock industry from accidental straying or intentional theft of livestock. In addition to inspecting all cattle and horses at the state's eight weekly auctions, field inspections are done on all livestock prior to changing ownership, leaving the state and going to slaughter.

During 2003, a total of 634,500 individual cattle, horses and elk were inspected. Livestock worth an estimated \$1.2 million was returned to their proper owners. This was a reduction in animals inspected from the previous year due to the statewide drought. It was noted that the same number of producers were in operation, but most had reduced their herd size due to summer grazing conditions.

The brand bureau presently has about 24,000 brands and earmarks on file in the "Central Brand Registry." As mandated by law, these brands must be renewed every five years to keep information current. The next scheduled renewal will be done during 2005.

In addition to each brand owner being listed in the Brand Book, the department issued everyone a laminated wallet-size proof of ownership card. The ownership card is intended for use during travel and when selling animals at auctions. The new Brand Book will be available for purchase by the public at a cost of \$25.00 early in 2006. In addition to this, the Brand Bureau is actively involved in tying the existing brand program to the new National Animal Identification plan, where each livestock owner will be issued a premise I.D. number by 2006 and each animal will need to be individually identified.

The brand department started collecting the cattlemen's part of predator control money in 1996. During 2003, livestock inspectors collected \$110,000 in predator control money. This money, like the beef promotion money, which has been collected by the brand inspectors for many years, will simply be forwarded to the Wildlife Services Program for its use. Sheep men will continue to have their allotment collect by the wool houses and forwarded to the department.

In an effort to assist and give training to the state's port-of-entry personnel, a livestock inspector was assigned to work monthly in each port-of-entry. These inspectors are authorized and equipped to chase down those livestock transporters who ignore the signs requiring all livestock hauling vehicles to stop.

This is an effort to help prevent diseased animals from entering the state and stolen animals from leaving the state. A new port-of-entry was added in 1998 in Loma, Colorado on I-70.

A heightened awareness in the meat industry has also resulted in the upgrading of the Farm Custom Slaughter Program to insure that meat derived from home grown, non-inspected livestock is prepared under the best conditions possible.

The killing of "downer" non-ambulatory animals has been eliminated from this program due to the BSE positive cow found in Washington State December 23, 2003.

Finally, the brand inspectors were instrumental in the distribution of Non-fat Dry Milk to many livestock men throughout the state in 2003. They also continued to monitor the states 46 elk farms and 6 hunting parks.

Elk Farming and Hunting Parks

During the 1997 legislative session, the Domestic Elk Farming bill was passed allowing the farming of domestic elk on an individual's property. The brand bureau has been asked to regulate this new industry. In 1999, an amendment to the original law allows the licensing of domestic elk hunting parks. Livestock inspectors are involved in the inspection of new facilities and elk as they come and go from each licensed farm or park. They help verify identification, ownership, health, and genetic purity of every animal. Within the first five years of the passage of this law 42 new farms and six hunting parks have been licensed with a total of 2181 elk on inventory. An eight-member elk advisory council was formed to make recommendations and give direction to this industry.

Investigation and Compliance/ Organic Certification

The Agriculture Investigator is responsible to protect the Utah producers and consumers of agricultural products. The Investigator works with local city, county, and state authorities to enforce the statutes and regulations assigned to agriculture. In conjunction with the Attorney Generals Office and the Division Directors, the specialist reviews actions for Administrative Hearings, and makes recommendations for actions of compliance. The specialist visits livestock auctions, regulates actions of dealers of agricultural products and gathers information for the proper licensing and bonding of dealers, auctions and brokers. The 2003 legislative session added a requirement for an annual report to be filed by dealers of agricultural commodities. That report has been mailed to all active dealers, and the information is being reviewed for proper bonding values and requirements.

The organic program certified 31 operations in 2003. There has been a significant growth in organic production in Utah. Utah will certify crops, livestock and processing facilities including organic beef, lamb, fruits and vegetables, coffee and grains. Utah was approved in February Of 2004 as a State Organic Program, which assumes the responsibility of enforcement for the United States Department of Agriculture National Organic Program in Utah. Investigators will continue surveillance at grocery stores, roadside stands, and farmers markets to ensure that products labeled as Organic meet the requirements and certification standards.